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THE MELLOW YEAR

A Man's Songs of Friendship

JAMES W. FOLEY

Gift of

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THE MELLOW YEAR

A Man's Songs of Friendship

BY

JAMES W. FOLEY

Author of "Boys and Girls," "Tales of the Trail," "Voices of Song," "Friendly Rhymes," "Songs of Schooldays," "The Letters of William Green"

PASADENA, CALIFORNIA

The Author's Press

1921

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O18M4
1921

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BY JAMES W. FOLEY

The Lovin'est Child

He's th' lovin'est child
That you ever did see,
Since the first time he smiled
His glad smile up at me.
He's th' soul of real mirth
And th' Lord must have smiled
When he came to this earth,
Just th' lovin'est child.

He's th' lovin'est boy,
He's so friendly and glad,
Of his mother the joy,
And the pride of his Dad.
He's as soft and as sweet
As a Spring day is mild,
From his head to his feet
Just th' lovin'est child.

He looks up with a grin
And he gurgles his tunes
From the cradle he's in,
And he chuckles and croons;
And he lifts up his arms
To his Mother or Dad,
He's just brimming with charms,
Just th' lovin'est lad.

Since the day that he came,
And we looked on his face,
Well, the world's not the same,
It's th' splendidest place
Out o' Heaven, I know.
Yes, th' Lord must have smiled
When he fashioned him so,
Just th' lovin'est child.

Just th' lovin'est child,
With his glad eyes that shine,
Like a Spring sunbeam mild,
With his cheek against mine.
See him tumble and roll—,
How th' Lord must have smiled
When he breathed in th' soul
Of that lovin'est child.

"THE FAMILY" EDITION

To the Children of the "Family" of San Francisco, California, with the friendliness of one of the "lovin'est children."

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THE MELLOW YEAR

The Mellow Year

I been sittin' here tonight
Dreamin' as by candle light;
Kind o' thinkin'—just about
Fur an' wide as all get-out;
Nothin' deep an' hard to do,
Just about th' same as you
Might if you was joggin' slow
Back some forty years or so
On the way of Life. An' say!
She's a good world, anyway.
Good to travel, in an' out,
Good to learn an' think about,
Good to dream of an' t' smile,
Good to wonder what's worth while,
Good to lend a helpin' hand,
Better still, to understand.

'Pears like Wisdom, she ain't done
Much for us at twenty-one.
Feller's got book-learnin', too;
Knows what makes the sky so blue,
Knows what makes it rain an' snow,
Knows why everything is so.
Lord, how he does love to spout
Streams of straight book-learnin' out;
Educated just immense,
Full of knowledge, but no sense;

The Mellow Year

Wave his hand in air just so,
Ready for to overthrow
Empires, continents and kings,
All the old, established things;
Feller'd think, to hear him scold,
He's th' judgment book unrolled,
Passin' wisdom's last decree
On th' world, an' you an' me.

Well, that's Youth; an' I recall
Mine, and how I knowed most all
Of th' things from Genesis
Clean to Revelations. Yes,
Ready to stand up an' throw
Rocks at Solon, Cicero,
Plato and Demosthenes
An' such little lights as these.
Pass my judgment quicker'n scat
On th' truth of this an' that,
Spillin' wisdom from my cup
Quicker'n worlds could soak it up.

Youth, since then, I've kind o' found,
Youth ain't got no middle ground,
Goes whole-hog or none at all
On all questions great an' small.

The Mellow Year

Measures like they do in school
Life with Learnin's three-foot rule,
Every question's got to be
Settled with a Q. E. D.

Old Book-Learnin's three-foot rule
Comes in mighty good in school
I'll allow, an' has its place
But it ain't th' human race
By no means, and Life don't look
Like it's printed in a book.
An' I'd like a rule to show
What makes certain fellers so;
Why some husky, strappin' lout
In th' fight goes down an' out,
While some runty little jay
Lifts the Flag and leads the way.

Ain't no learnin' will amount
To a bean-hill that don't count
Human bein's as they be
X for unknown quantity.
Ain't no learnin' is complete
That don't keep a feller sweet,
Ready to come 't least half ways,
Kind o' keerful what he says,

The Mellow Year

Always more'n half inclined
To be merciful and kind,
Willin' to admit that he
Might be wrong and to agree
With th' 'leven rather'n stay
Sot in his own stubborn way.

Life ain't some book-learnin' fact
Mathematically exact,
And don't foller no set rule
Like a feller learns in school,
And when he learns that he's come
To be educated some,
Was a time once when I'd pass
Judgment just like pullin' grass
On my neighbors—knowed just what
Orto be and orto not.
But as years have gone somehow
I don't judge nobody now,
And I don't want none to be
Always ready to judge me.

Thirty's better'n twenty-one;
Wisdom's kind 'o just begun
Then—a feller's gettin' ripe
Like a year-old meerschaum pipe

The Mellow Year

That you've smoked along and brung
Where th' smoke don't burn your tongue.
An' y' sort o' like to squint
Down th' bowl and get a hint
How th' color's goin' to show
In a couple years or so.
Then there's Forty—I dunno,
Forty ca'ms a feller so,
Makes him mellow like an' mild,
More th' sperrit of th' child.
He just wants to love an' live
Help a little an' forgive,
Find what's really Happiness,
Feel contented like with less.
Judgment ain't as quick an' stern,
Willin'er I think to learn;
Much more ready to admit
T'other feller's view of it,
Even if 'taint his idee,
Leastways it seems so to me.

Understandin'! That's th' thing!
Ain't no book'll ever bring
That. You're got to hit th' road
Carryin' a real man's load.

The Mellow Year

Struggle as a feller must,
Throat plumb dry an' choked with dust.
Bein' tempted, slippin' some,
Needin' help but bein' dumb.
Hopin', prayin', wonderin' what
May be Truth an' may be not.
Wantin' sympathy an' cheer,
Wishin' There was only Here.
Needin' to be understood
As a feller half-way good,
Fightin', strivin' as men do,
Failin', just like me an' you,
Great sometimes an' sometimes small,
And just human after all.

Somethin' 'bout it, I dunno,
Forty ca'ms a feller so,
Leastways it seems so to me.
Hope at fifty I can be
That much milder and more kind,
More to mercy's ways inclined,
That much gladder just to live,
That much readier to forgive,
Fifty—may be them'll bring
Understandin'—that's the thing!

Unafraid

I've got to go on
Till the last dream is done,
Till the last song is gone,
Or the last fight is won;
Till there dies the last spark
Of the fire in the dusk,
'Till the last star is dark,
Till I've gnawed the last husk
Of defeat, of regret,
Till the last sigh is stilled,
Till I've paid the last debt,
Till the last drop is spilled
From the goblet of Hope,
Till the last breath is gone;
I may stumble and grope
But I've got to go on.

I've got to go on
Till the last prayer is cried,
Till the last light has flown,
And the last dream has died;
Till the last breath of me
Has been spent in the fight,
Till the last day to be
Has been shrouded in night.
I may faint, I may fall,
I may tremble and fear,

Unafraid

But the clear trumpet call
To the fight let me hear!
Give me courage to rise,
Give me strength to revive
Every faint hope that lies
On the field where I strive;
For the battle seem lost,
And the last chance seem flown,
What the struggle may cost,
Still I've got to go on.

I've got to go on;
I may fall, I may fail,
I may die ere the dawn
Lets me look on the Grail,
Gall may brim me a cup,
Fate may spike every gun,
But I won't give it up,
I won't quit, I won't run,
I won't cry truce or yield,
How the fates on me frown,
They may strip off my shield
But I won't lay it down
Till the last veil is rent,
Till the last day's at dawn,
And the last breath is spent,
For I've got to go on.

The Legacies

Earth—you have given me much; cool turf and flowers,
Great trees; wide meadows, where in vagrant hours
I lay in shade or walked in clover sweet;
Aye, you have given me place to rest my feet
Secure and sure; and you have given me air
To breathe; and beauty; of your store my share
Has been a generous gift; my every mood
You've nourished; you have given me drink and food,
Bird-song, the dawn and twilight; odors soft
And fragrant; and a grassy couch where oft
I lay and looked up at the stars that bade
My soul arise, serene and strong and glad.

So when I come to say my last good-night,
See my last sunset fade upon the sight,
I shall leave you the dust of me to make
A flower the more perhaps for beauty's sake.

Time, you have borne with me for long and lent
Me hour on hour where tears and smiles were blent
In mellowed sweetness; you have given me days
When gladness loved me all the many ways
She knows to love; and you have comforted
My grief and helped me lay my hallowed dead
In flowered gardens of my memory
To rest till I shall lie where they may be;
What sorrows you have taken from me, and stings,
While keeping for me ever all the things

The Legacies

I loved and cherished; how you gave me youth,
And manhood, ruddy-red with life, and truth,
Years now serene and ripe like fruit made sweet
With sun and showers and summer's mellowing heat!

So when upon the hilltop we shall stand
To say good-by with each an outstretched hand,
I leave you what good deeds I may have wrought—
'Tis little, but 'tis all the wealth I've got.

And Friend, my Friend of all those good, glad years,
Who gave me smiles for smiles, and mingled tears
With mine when sorrow supped with me, and dread,
Who ate of my dry herbs and bitter bread,
Who walked with me upon the stony ways,
Bathed my bruised feet, nor ever found our days
Too short for sympathy, nor once too long
For bearing half my burden; you, whose song
Rang in my ears when days of mine bereft
Of all but you, as though a pearl were left
In Life's bad, bitter cup the while, and then
Just by the taste of you grown sweet again—

When I shall say good-by, then I shall weave
A garland of those days of ours and leave
You this for Memory—and you shall take
This greatest treasure of mine for Love's own sake.

Forgot

I had a friend—a very precious friend;
I thought one time, long gone, to tell him so.
His were the homely qualities that blend
In human sweetness; I am sure you know,
Perhaps you have, a friend like that, whose days
Were simple and serene; he was so blind
To little faults; his were the flowered ways
Of fellowship, and Oh, he was so kind!

I thought to tell him all of that; to say
What oft I cherished in my secret heart;
How I was better always for the way
He tempered me with mercy and fine art
Of being true and gentle, and yet strong
With very gentleness of courage, too,
Who met my sharp complainings with a song—
Yes, he was kind and gentle and so true.

Yes, he was such a friend as that, upsprung
From days and nights of struggle, on a plan
Of human tenderness and Fame had sung
Of him this, and this only: "Here's a man!
She has no nobler eulogy to say—
A man by every deed and word and thought,
Rich with rare richness, tempered in that way
That gold is to its purest fineness wrought.

Forgot

I thought to tell him—and I said, again,
And once again: "But surely he must know!"
(These are the halting, awkward ways of men)
And I held silence nor I told him so,
These things I say to you, with all the love
I had for him, but somehow did not tell;
My heart was truly Friendship's treasure-trove,
But it was hidden far too deep—and well!

Once I took roses—red ones, in my hand,
And laid them by him—laid them by him near;
Laid them there at the very borderland
Of life—or death—who knows what may be here?
I laid the roses there, uncomforted,
The while my tears fell, waste and burning hot,
Then knelt in the dim silences and said:
"Here are the roses—those I had forgot!"

On the Square

To be just as I am
In my world, every day,
Without pretense or sham,
To mean just what I say,
To be square in my talk,
To look true with my eye;
To go straight in my walk
And to aim middling high.

To be real—that's the thing,
To be real and be true;
Not to squirm at the ring
Of the metal in you;
Not an echo or shade
Of somebody to be,
But to know that I'm made
Of the substance of Me.

To live up to the bills,
Nothing less, nothing more,
Without tinsel or frills,
With my best foot before;
To cash in all my chips
Any hour of the day,
With a smile on my lips,
Glad they asked me to play.

On the Square

To sit down and rejoice
At my grate, in my way,
Not afraid of the Voice
That inquires of my day;
Just to know that I played
In the game and was fair,
Didn't trick, didn't trade,
Won or lost on the square.

Just to know that the core
In the middle of me
Is no festering sore
I should shudder to see;
To be garbed with no cloak
That's all pretense or sham;
Just to dare go dead broke
But be just as I am!

Loving—That's All

A good many years for a wee bit of living,
A mighty few rich and a whole lot of poor.
A good many tears, lots of need for forgiving,
And hard knocks enough to go 'round, you be sure.
There's plenty of struggling and pushing and shoving,
And hard words along with the pull and the haul,
And, Lord, how this old world of ours needs just loving,
Just loving and loving and loving—that's all.

There's a whole lot of stiff upper lips and of chaffing
To cover up sore hearts; I know—I've been there;
There's a good deal of sorrow and not too much laughing,
And many a fellow who's not had his share.
There's plenty of stones in the road where you travel
To stub your big toe for a trip and a fall,
There's many a tangled-up skein to unravel,
Before you learn loving—just loving, that's all.

There's one fellow climbing, another one slipping,
Some places are easy and some mighty hard;
There's boosting, that's true, but a whole lot of tripping,
The road through this life, it's not all boulevard.
Some wrinkles from laughing, a whole lot from crying,
And scars, too, in plenty, from scramble and fall,
And many a fellow who's tired out trying,
Who needs only loving, just loving, that's all.

Loving—That's All

Not too many saints, and a whole lot of sinners
Like you are and I am, but way down inside
There's good in us all, if we can't all be winners,
And losing's no crime, if a fellow has tried.
A cheer for the man in the race who is leading,
But the fellow who fights with his back to the wall,
A cheer for him too, and the thing he is needing:
Just loving and loving and loving—that's all.

There's plenty of knowledge but not too much learning,
The kind that you get from hard knocks and from care,
The kind that knows sorrow and struggle and yearning
And just wants to love folks and love and to spare;
The kind that knows God's honest truth when he reads it,
That hears clear above all the struggle the call:
The world needs your loving and needs it and needs it—
Just loving—and loving—and loving—that's all!

What Might Have Been

Perhaps if you'd told him the things you now say,
If you'd put out your hand when he stumbled that day;
Perhaps if you'd seen him with vision as clear
As you do when he's lying so silently here;
Perhaps if you'd let him hear one kindly word
Of the many you spoke that he knew not or heard,
Perhaps if your sympathy had been as wide
As it is, now he's dead—well, he might not have died.

Perhaps if you'd sent him the roses you sent
Ere you heard that the breath of his life had been spent;
Perhaps if you'd looked for the good that you say
Lay so rich in his soul, and had told him that day;
Perhaps if you'd cheered him, and helped him along
With a word and a smile and the snatch of a song,
Perhaps if you'd honored him thus ere he slept,
His days had been glad—and he might not have wept.

That day when he hungered for kindness and cheer,
Did he know he would find it when lying dead here?
That time when he struggled and suffered and wept,
Did he know you would come and be kind when he slept?
The loaf that you give—did he know 'twas the sum
Of the crumbs you denied, and that friendship would
come
To the edge of the grave and strow flower and word
When he lay here so still—when he cared not or heard?

The Potter and the Clay

He is strong, for he was broken
On the torture wheel of pain;
He is silent, who has spoken
Hasty judgments, aye, and vain;
He is rich, since he knew losses,
True, by pledges once unkept,
He stands straight, for he bore crosses
And is glad, for that he wept.

He knows beauty, through his blindness,
He is humble, who knew pride;
Tender for his soul's unkindness,
And the Christ he once denied;
He is pure for muck and wallow
Where he lay and was unclean,
And sincere for every hollow
Sham and pretense that was mean.

He knows love, for that his spirit
Was unlovely and was mean;
For that fire that swept to sear it
Is that calm soul and serene;
He is whole for waves that battered,
Beat and buffeted and cast
Him upon the shore, a shattered,
Broken, bleeding thing at last.

The Potter and the Clay

He is free for that once prison
And the wings that beat on bars;
For that Hell whence he is risen
Is the fellowship with stars;
And that bowed head in its meekness
Was defiant of the laws—
He knows courage for the weakness
And the cowardice that was.

How but crushed and bruised and broken
Can the potter mold his clay?
How but through a grief unspoken
Could come Love to light the way?
By this dust of me Thou grindest,
By these tears of me and rue,
With this potter's clay Thou findest
Thou shalt build my temple new.

Father William to Date

"You are kind, Father William," the young man said,
"You are kind and your smile is aglow;
And is it from what you have heard or read,
And how did you come to be so?"
"All the days of my life," Father William replied,
"There were sorrows and doubts and fears,
And often aloud in my grief I cried,
So I learned to be kind—through tears."

"You are glad, Father William," the young man said,
"You are glad and your laughter rings;
When others are gloomy you smile instead,
And the soul of you sings and sings."
"All the days of my life," Father William replied,
"I have striven the truth to gain,
I lost it in self and greed and pride,
And I learned to be glad—through pain!"

"You are calm, Father William," the young man said,
"You have peace and you go your way,
And jostle no man and you earn your bread
With the toil that you do each day."
"I have wanted for peace," Father William replied,
All the days of my busy life;
Haste and harshness and blows I tried,
And I learned what is peace—through strife!"

Father William to Date

"You give, Father William," the young man said,
"You give with a generous hand,
From your little store, not a stone, but bread,
And somehow you understand."
"I have hungered myself," Father William replied,
"And I found not a crumb in greed,
And the soul of me might have shriveled and died,
So I learned how to give—through need."

"You are slow, Father William," the young man said,
"You are slow to judge and condemn,
The broken and sad and uncomforted,
You have mercy for all of them."
"I have sinned myself," Father William replied,
"And Mercy besought to win
A pardon for me—and my tears were dried—
And I learned not to judge—through sin."

Brothers

This is a verse of a man who sinned,
  As many a man has done;
Of a man who sped the tale like the wind,
  As many a man has done.
And a pharisee with an uprolled eye,
Who saw the man and who let him lie,
And muttered a prayer: "Lord, 'twas not I!"
  As many a man has done.

This is a verse of a man who wept,
  As many a man has done,
Who felt his soul with red flames swept,
  As many a man has done.
Who wept for the scar and the stain and blot
On the soul of him, and the crimson spot,
And who felt the brand that was white and hot,
  As many a man has done.

This is a verse of a man who jeered,
  As many a man has done,
Of a man who taunted and one who feared,
  As many a man has done.
And the sinner fell and they let him lie,
For he was a sinner, to live or die
Unfit, and the three of them passed him by,
  As many a man has done.

Brothers

And one there was who had sinned and wept,
  Even as the sinner had done;
Whose soul with a flaming fire once swept,
  As many a soul has done.
A man who had fallen in mud and mire,
Whose soul had been scarred with a hell of fire,
But through his sorrow had risen higher,
  As many a man has done.

And he stopped where the sinner stood apart,
  As many a man has done,
And clasped his hand and he touched his heart,
  As many a man has done.
With hope and courage and sympathy,
Tender and kind as a brother might be,
And he hated the mouthing pharisee,
  As many a man has done.

And he linked his arm the sinner's through,
  As many a man has done,
And he walked with him, as Christ might do,
  And many a man has done.
And the soul of the man was cleansed and white
That was red before and the hopeless night
Was gone and he walked in the way of light,
  As many a man has done.

Hospice

He left the door ajar that evil night
When rain beat fiercely down, and shut the light
Of friendly moon and stars from earth; and came
The bursts of jagged lightning like the flame
Of hissing fire across the sullen sky.
He left the door ajar that night, and I
Would fain have shut it tight, but he said: "Nay!
I left the door ajar—so let it stay!"

In through the opened door the rain beat then,
And he flung up the curtain high again,
When I had shut it close to keep mine eyes
From that dread flashing in the fiery skies.
I drew the curtain close; I was afraid,—
I would have shut the storm all out and stayed
In warmth inside the house, but he said: "Nay!
I threw the curtain up—so let it stay!"

And then I trembled when the rain beat down
Upon the sill and at the angry frown
Of skies when the storm lulled, and at the wind
That beat its bitter gale of cold and dinned
A song of furies on my coward ear;
I would have shut the storm all out, through fear
And selfishness. "What is a house," I cried,
"But refuge from the storm that beats outside?"

Hospice

"Why leave ye doors stand open to the storm?
Why bid ye winds in when we might be warm?
Why lift ye curtains high when lightnings fly
With fury over all the blazing sky
To make my soul afraid?" So then I spake,
Impatient anyone should will to make
His house storm's hospice, nor shut out the din,
But bid the rain and fiery lightnings in.

So then he said: "And are there none outside
Who have a need of some door opened wide?
And walk there none in darkness and the night
Who may have cheer from the assuring light
That streams where I have left the curtain high?
Nay, shut thee not the door! Shall we but cry
With selfish fears and shall we two be warm,
Nor care if there be strugglers in the storm?
Fling wide thy heart's door open, in the din
Of wind and storm and bid the wanderers in!"

Lost

A seed held prisoned in its walls a flower
  Fair over all, but fell upon a stone:
So I had in my heart one idle hour
  A dream that bade me live it as my own.
Once was a word that trembled on my lips,
  To comfort hearts with stress of sorrow worn—
How timid inspiration frightened slips
  From us—and dies unborn.

I know a song full musical and sweet
  That came and on the brink of being stood,
Expecting me with pipe and reed to greet
  The soul of it, so glorious and good.
But I was indolent, dull, loath to sing;
  Till, after while, I bade it enter,—then
I heard its timid feet go pattering
  Nor ever came again.

Somewhere I know the undone deeds must be,
  The unborn thoughts and all the unsung songs,
Not bitter, angry—only sad that we
  Have worked them such irreparable wrongs.
As in the seed that lies upon the stone
  The flower, unblossomed, hopeless, must be sad,
And yearn to know what never can be known—
  What life it might have had.

The Poor

Come, boil the pot with coppers cast,
  Or silver, that the poor be fed;
The world is crying, first to last
  For aid to the uncomforted.
All things shall change, the prophet saith,
  But of one thing we may be sure,
How much of vain pomp flourisheth,
  We shall have, Ah, so many poor.

And up and down the street they cry,
  Who would bring succor where is want:
"Come, dance, and merry-make and buy,
  The hungry wait, thin, lean and gaunt!
The lanes of poverty are long,
  And winter cold is keen and sure.
With lute and tripping dance and song
  We shall get money for the poor."

Yes, we shall dance with tripping feet,
  In flowered halls, where Beauty sings,
And some sell bon-bons we may eat,
  In gay bazaars, fantastic things.
And we shall laugh and eat and drink,
  The snob, aristocrat and boor,
And glow with fervor as we think
  Of money gotten for the poor.

The Poor

And in the marts are cloth of gold
  And furs and laces, heap on heap,
And tapestries; in loft and hold
  And vault the gold lies ankle deep;
And in the bins are corn and wheat,
  With kine on hill and plain and moor,
So vast the riches at our feet,
  And, God, there are so many poor!

God help us all! It seems so strange!
  This wealth of sun and sky and air!
The pastured acres rich that range
  A thousand miles from here to there.
These golden fields with birds and bees,
  These riches all so vast and sure,
These bursting bins and teeming seas,
  And yet, Dear God, so many poor!

No Man's Land

Out there in No Man's Land,
  Where the star-shells flare and wither
On the blood and the mud and sand—
  Oh, Searchers, come hither, hither!
Carefully now, for the star-shells are flashing;
Down in a hole, while the great guns smashing
The sodden earth! Now, stealthily flying,
Come where this bundle of rags is lying,
Once a soldier, with blood all wet,
Gently now, for it's living yet!

Out there in No Man's Land,
  Where death is in every furrow,
Stretchers with heroes manned,
  And down in the crimson burrow,
To lift him up, who is feebly groaning,
To bear him away and the night wind moaning;
Stealthily now, for the shells fall thickly,
Then up and away and carry him quickly
Back through the lines, with his blood all wet,—
Hurry along, and we'll save him yet!

Green now is No Man's Land,
  Green with the grain and the clover,
Healed with the touch of His hand,
  And the scream of the shells is over.
But the ones they smashed, now shall they go whither?
Oh, Searchers, with mercy come hither, hither!

No Man's Land

For there is need of the weak and broken,—
Come, bring a litter of love, the token
Of help and hope, as the Master planned,
For these lying broken in No Man's Land.

Peace—hath it No Man's Land
  Where the broken and sick are lying?
Nor the mercy of men at hand
To comfort and still the crying
Of men and women and children falling
Broken in the fight and the Master calling:
"The needy lie here, and shall they go whither?
Ye bearers of litters, come, hither, hither!
Come with the mercy the Father planned,
Oh, who will come with Me to No Man's Land?"

Knowledge

I do not know if planets meet,
  Or how deep is the sea;—
I know my neighbor's across the street,
  And he has need of me.

I do not know if cold and storm
  Sweep Mars by sea and land,—
I know my neighbor's heart is warm,
  I'll go and clasp his hand.

Of that spot on the sun that speaks
  Of storms I cannot say—
I know those spots on that man's cheeks
  Are tears to wipe away.

I do not know how far the sun,
  How deep is space or wide,—
I know that man near me is one
  I might help if I tried.

I do not know if spirits come
  In vagrant mood and while,—
I know that Heaven is the sum
  Of help and cheer and smile.

I know the day is glad with cheer,
  I know the sky is blue,
And Heaven might be very near
  If I willed it—and you!

Brothers of Men

You are Brothers of Men! Let me say it again
That you may not forget: You are Brothers of Men!
Yours to comfort the weak; yours to walk with the strong;
Yours to bring the wise counsel and lift the clear song;
Yours the spirit to smile, what the task to be done,
Yours the courage to fight till the battle is won;
But, more than all else, I would tell you again
That you may not forget: You are Brothers of Men!

Yours the quick word restrained; yours the strength of a Man;
Yours the glory of giving; the wisdom to plan;
The strong will to purpose; the courage to do;
The firm soul abiding the bitter day through;
As clean as a woman; unspoiled as a child;
As strong as a Man, and with mercy as mild
As the great heart of Pity! Oh, hear it again,
That you may not forget: You are Brothers of Men!

Aye, Brothers of Men! To be steadfast, sincere,
To be kind, to be gentle; with hope and with cheer
To make the way brighter; to clasp hands with men
In friendship and kindness and walk with them then;
And walk not before men, nor follow, nor chide,
Nor flatter, nor envy, but walk side by side
With love such as He had! Oh, hear it again,
What glory is yours, who are Brothers of Men!

A Little Song

This little task, I'll do it now,
  And it forever shall be done;
This little fight I'll win somehow,
  And it shall ever thence be won;
I'll say with grace this yea or nay,
  And cast the die forever true,
By little steps to reach the way
  Of gladness when the day is through.

This little fret, this needless fear
  I shall cast off with faith serene;
This little doubt I shall make clear,
  And know this duty is not mean,
Not trifling, not to thrust aside
  Or turn like some unwritten page,
It is for me to do with pride
  And my best effort to engage.

This little hurt I shall not mind.
  This little hate I shall not will
To sup with me and I shall grind
  No meal for anger at my mill,
From little pride that struts the earth
  I pray my spirit may be free,
To let the humbler pride of worth
  Come there and be the guest of me.

A Little Song

No little gain that yet is loss,
  But loss that may be sometime gain;
No little riches that are dross
  When all of living is made plain;
No giant's power for mighty deeds,
  No genius for the hero's task,
But strength enough for little needs
  Is all the blessing that I ask.

No little spites, no little greeds,
  No little cant of Thee and Me—
Enough for my so simple needs
  And much for all the needs there be;
No blazing meteor overhead,
  No flaming comet in the skies,
But velvet pansies in a bed,
  And love that shines from smiling eyes.

My Neighbor and I

If I weigh up the worth of my labor
With the scales of exactness I hold
When I'm judging the deeds of my neighbor,
Whose frailties I'm given to scold;
I might not take half as much pleasure
In thinking how fine I may be,
When I've taken my neighbor's just measure,
If I use the same measure for me.

If I do what I have to do squarely
As I know he should do, and I say;
If I play the game he plays and fairly,
As I know in my heart he should play;
I shall not ask what kind of man is he,
Or judge him a great man or small,
For my own self will keep me so busy
I'll have no time to judge him at all.

If when he does well I shall praise him
With the measure of praise I give me,
If with the same gladness I raise him
As high as I know I should be;
If when he does ill, all my railings
Be with voice that is still and is small
As when I scold me for my failings,—
Well, then I won't scold him at all.

My Neighbor and I

If I make him the many excuses
  I make for myself when I'm wrong,
If in judging I practice the uses
  Of mercy and cheer him along
With the smiles that make for my well-being,
  If my pats on my back I make his,
The first thing I know I'll be seeing
  What a mighty fine fellow he is.

If I'll just judge myself and my labor
  With the justice I judge when it's he,
And then judge the needs of my neighbor
  With the mercy I use to judge me,
I'll not ask what kind of man is he,—
  If the mercy I seek shall be his,
It will keep me, I'm sure, mighty busy
  To be—well, be good as he is!

Just Between Us Two

You're a likeable fellow, you were when a boy,
And your mother was fond of you, too;
But you've warped some since then; in the struggle for joy
You've missed half the pleasure of you.
I know you are worried, for worries are rife,
In the fight to be on the top shelf,
But I'm sure you would get more of joy out of life
If you'd get on good terms with yourself.

I know you are anxious to be at the top,
When the battle of living is through;
You're rolling a ball up a hill and can't stop,
For fear it will roll over you.
You're working a full shift and worrying one,
And you'd like to sleep one but you don't,
You think you'll be happy when work is all done,
But I'm reasonably sure that you won't.

I know you want money and power and place,
That's the way all you fellows begin,
You've set up a standard—you're keeping the pace
That you have to keep up if you win.
And perhaps you will win all you wish in the end,
Be just rich when the battle is through,
But tell me now, frankly, as friend to a friend:
Is it worth what it's doing to you?

Just Between Us Two

If it's losing the dreams that you had when a boy,
  If it's stealing the smiles from your face,
If it's robbing the day of its measure of joy,
  If it's rusting your soul in the race;
If it's putting off happiness day after day,
  If your tired soul keeps hearing; "Not yet!"
Don't you think it is foolish to trade life away
  For the things you won't want when you get?

You're a sensible mortal: suppose when it ends,
  You find all your dreams were dead wrong?
Suppose you have traded off wife, kids and friends,—
  Yes, traded them off for a song.
It is splendid to work and it's fine to achieve,
  And it's good to be on the top shelf,
But right down to brass tacks, now, do you believe
  You can win at the cost of yourself?

Just Being Kind

Just being kind—Oh, friend of mine,
It makes the blessed sun to shine,
With newer, warmer light, and brings.
A rosy glow on common things.
Just being kind—some weary while
Of day to brighten with a smile,
And we shall richer gladness find,
Just being kind.

Just being kind—somehow, somewhere,
This day and every day to share
With whom shall need, a word, a smile
Of cheer and gladness that may while
Some fret or care away and make
The day seem brighter for its sake;
To make glad some sad heart that pined,
Just being kind.

Just being kind—who does not need
The blessed thought or word or deed
That breathes on the spent fire, and, lo,
Makes every dying ember glow.
Just being kind—Oh, do not we
Each cherish some glad memory
That some one in our hearts enshrined,
Just being kind.

Just Being Kind

Just being kind—how may we bring
Like the first wild flowers of the Spring,
  The garland of a gladness rare
  With just a friendly smile somewhere.
Just being kind—how may be stirred
The heart to joy with just a word,
  And memory with fresh roses twined
  Just being kind.

Just being kind—now may we give
The best we have to life, and live
  In spendthrift waste of word and smile
  And cheer and gladness all the while.
Just being kind—to go our ways
As pilgrims through the round of days,
  And every day's chief gladness find
  Just being kind.

The Little Things

It wasn't much—a friendly voice,
That hailed me with good cheer;
A very small and simple thing,
Not worth inscribing here;
And yet somehow I was in need,
My skies grown dark and gray,
That friendly greeting comforted
And made me glad all day.

It wasn't much— a sunny smile
That someone offered me;
It came just at a weary while,
As weary whiles must be;
Who gave it never dreamed, I'm sure,
That smiles may be like dew
Upon the flowers and weary hearts
Make glad the whole day through.

It wasn't much—a simple deed
That some one thought to do;
A very simple thing and small;
Perhaps Someone was you;
A little gem of thoughtfulness—
And yet a jewel rare,
For all the dreary day along
It flashed and glitttered there.

The Little Things

It wasn't much—a kindly word,
A firm and friendly hand
Outstretched that meant a lot of things
I'm sure you understand;
Somehow it cheered and lifted me
As I went on my way,
And left new courage in my heart
To gladden all the day.

Such little things, the friendly voice,
The kindly deed and smile,
The outstretched hand and sunny word
That came that dreary while;
Somebody merely passed and smiled
And hailed me with good cheer,
And all the day it made me glad,
Just as I'm telling here.

The End of the Road

Dig, dig, dig!
All through the livelong day;
  Bent over a desk with a weary brain
And hair that is getting gray.
Dig, dig, dig!
For the dollars that piled up fast,
  And filled his dreams when he slept at night
Worn out by the chase at last.

Dig, dig, dig!
From morning till late at night;
  With a wrinkled brow and a heart so hard
That it felt as a dollar might.
Dig, dig, dig!
A deal that was big or small,
  Another hunch and a hasty lunch
With dollars to crown it all.

Dig, dig, dig,
At sixty miles an hour,
  From eight to noon and from one to six,
Wrinkled and gray and sour;
Dig, dig, dig,
Daughter and son and wife,
  But he had no time for profitless things
So he put them out of his life.

The End of the Road

Dig, dig, dig,
Wallow and wade and roll,
  Through a mass of dollars mountain high
Then on to a newer goal;
Dig, dig, dig,
Heap and gather and get,
  For sixty is only middle age,
There's time for a million yet.

Dig, dig, dig,
Liver and spleen and gall,
  Warped and twisted and dead and dried,
And stomach—none at all;
Dig, dig, dig,
Gather and get and store,
  Heap and pile and measure and count,
More and more and more.

Dig, dig, dig,
Gravel and dirt and stones;
  The sexton heaps up another mound
And makes him a bed for bones.
Dig, dig, dig,
Gather and get and keep.
  And the earth is ten thousand miles across
But only six feet deep.

Let's Play a Little While

Come on—let's lay the burden down—the weight of frets and cares,
Let's slack the pace a little in the race of real affairs,
Let's give the troubled soul a rest from all these cares of ours,
And find new joy in living out among the birds and flowers.
Life's such a fleeting breath at best, and night will be so long,
And hearts will be so better for a cheery smile and song,
Let's smooth the wrinkled brow of Care and learn again to smile,
Let's lay the heavy burden down and play a little while.

Come on—let's quit the race a while and idle by the way,
Let's get some pleasure out of life while still it shall be day;
Let's put by work and worry once, nor ever dream that Care
Shall know the place we've wandered to and come to find us there;
Let's be like boys on Saturday, with all the lessons done
And only joy for company, be battles lost or won
While we be gone; let's quit the road and wander off a mile
Where we may search for violets—let's play a little while.

Let's Play a Little While

Come on—'twill keep till we come back, this work we
have to do!
Let's lie a while upon the grass while still the sky is blue;
Let's breathe the air of freedom once, forget the world
and all,
Beside the brook, beneath the trees, and hear the song-
birds call.
Let's find the gladdest way we know, and wander side
by side
Where bees and buds and blossoms are, and squirrels
dart and hide;
Let's sail upon the sea of dreams to some enchanted isle,
With only joy for company—let's play a little while.

Come on—the day is, Oh, so fair with light and life and
all!
Let's give our tired souls a rest and strip from us the pall
Of ceaseless toil and care and fret—let's wander far away
From street and town and all they mean, and idle all
the day.
Let's find the way to happiness, the path the schoolboy
finds,
And follow on and on and on for all the way it winds;
Let's for the once forget to frown and learn again to
smile,
And Life will be so sweeter when we've played a little
while.

A Brother of Mine

He's a brother of mine, or at least he should be,
That's the way I interpret the thing, don't you see?
Though he may be somebody I don't even know,
Though he does not quite travel the ways I may go,
Yet I can't really say that I am not concerned
If he wins or he fails, for somehow I have learned
It will cheer him a little, if I give the sign
Of a smile and he feels he's a brother of mine.

If I know he's in trouble I can't stand aside
As a stranger would do, and I know he has pride
That will keep him from telling his troubles to me,
So I like to get close as a brother would be.
If he were my own brother I'd not turn away
And leave him alone, but I'd walk up and lay
My hand on his shoulder and his eyes might shine
With hope if I made him a brother of mine.

I wouldn't hold back if I saw him astray
On a road that I felt would bring ruin some day;
I would not declare with my lips set and grim
It was none of my business what happened to him.
For it's much of my business to help when I can
With a smile or a word or a hope or a plan;
And somehow I feel in the greater Design
Of life and the world he's a brother of mine.

A Brother of Mine

I know he's as human and needy as I,
No more and no less, and I won't pass him by
Without stretching a hand out and letting him know
I want to be friendly if he'll have it so.
For if life were harsh with me, harsh and unkind,
The day gray and long and the way hard to find,
I'd like him to come with a smile as the sign
Of his friendship—yes, come as a brother of mine.

A Pretty Good World

It's a pretty good world, as a world's apt to go;
At least, it's the best world that most of us know.
If it's hot in the sun when the sky's blue and fair,
There's twilight and evening and cool, fragrant air
In the night and the dark; if there's hard work to do,
There's plenty of play and a chance to rest, too,
And if there are tears in some day's weary while,
There's a lot of real gladness and many a smile.

There are thistles, of course, in the meadow I see,
But look at the flowers they have strewn there for me;
Just scattered there broadcast and bright in the sun,
And I, who have plucked, never planted a one.
There's a cloud in the sky, or for me or for you,
But the black of the cloud only brings out the blue
Of the summery sky; see the brook that is pearled
With its crystalline drops! It's a pretty good world!

There are cowards, that's true, but so few when you read
Of the brave men and fine and the courage and deed
Of the heroes who battled and struggled and won
In the fight that has waged since the world was begun.
There's greed, too, and hatred, but over above
There's a wealth of fine spirit and friendship and love,
And bright eyes and smiling and warm hearts and kind—
It's a good world, as good as you're likely to find.

A Pretty Good World

There's waste and there's evil, there's crime and there's lust,
But where is the woodpile that doesn't have dust,
And chips, sticks and splinters? And there's the sound wood
For building and burning that's solid and good;
There's chaff in the bushel, but most of it's grain,
There's green grass and flowers and fruit in the rain;
And for every serpent that hisses and stings
A hundred rare song birds and butterfly wings.

It's a pretty good world from beginning to end,
There's blue sky and flower and hard work and friend,
And gladness and singing and many long years
And a lot more of laughter and smile than of tears.
So put in your laughter and friendship and cheer,
Don't wait till tomorrow, but now and right here!
Somebody may need just that smile you've unfurled
To make it and keep it a pretty good world!

Things a Man May Do

To make the way a little plain where it was dark before;
To smile a really friendly smile out through the open door;
To ease the load a little bit for one who follows me,
To light a candle in the dark so wayfarers may see
A friendly inn close by the road; to plant a tree where men
May lie and rest and dream and sleep and go their ways again
Refreshed and ready for the task; when life's all done and through,
I guess these are the things, perhaps, a man should really do.

To lead some troubled soul to smile when all seems lost and gone;
To walk with some one who is lame and cheer him to go on;
To make the world a bit worth while for some one who may be
In need of comforting perhaps and one kind word from me;
To clear the briars from the path that grew there yesterday;
To set a sign post here and there that some may find the way;

Things a Man May Do

To trim the lamp that leads men on to shelter, and make new
The beacon fires of hope—these things I guess a man should do.

To store wide waters well with bread; think not too much of gain;
To mark the snares and pitfalls well and leave the highway plain
For him who goes this way again; to blaze a friendly tree
Where pathways lead through tangled woods that travelers may see;
To follow where brave men have led and make the trail so he
Who comes another time this way may safely follow me;
To scatter seeds along the way where all those flowers grew
For me to pick—these things I'm sure are what a man should do.

So let me make the way of men a little happier way,
Where some one may pick flowers perhaps that I have sown today;

Things a Man May Do

Where some worn traveler in the night with gratitude
may turn
In at the inn where shines the lamp that I set out to burn;
I'd like to know some ship in stress might find a harbor
fair
And safety from the night and storm by watch fires
burning there
That one day I heaped on the shore—and when my days
are through
I'd like to feel I'd done some things a man should really
do.

A Very Little Song

A little grief came down the way
Of life upon a sunny day,
And touched a gentle heart with pain
That misted all the day like rain.

A little grief came down the way
Of life upon a sunny day.

A little tear came after grief
All sodden like an Autumn leaf
In sere October's mist, and lay
Upon a cheek that sunny day.

A little tear came after grief
All sodden like a mist-wet leaf.

A little gladness came along
The way of Sorrow with a song
And with its dainty fingers set
A smile upon the cheek still wet.

A little gladness came along
The way of Sorrow with a song.

And then a rainbow came that way
And arched across the dreary day,
For through the tear that weary while
There fell the sunshine of a smile.

A Very Little Song

And so a rainbow came that way
And arched across the dreary day.

A little grief to touch with pain,
A little tear that falls like rain
Upon the sunny way the while,
A little gladness and a smile,
And, see, behind the cloud the blue,
With rainbows arching over too!

Just Around the Corner

Just around the corner—just a step or two from here
There's a well of water that is cool and crystal clear;
There's an eye that twinkles with the rarest kind of smile;
Patience, we shall reach the spot in just a little while.
Hot the day and dusty and the way is rough and long,
We shall find a place to rest and we shall hear a song,
We shall greet a friend or two and they shall bid us cheer—
Just around the corner—just a step or two from here.

Just around the corner where the roses are that fall
Fresh and fair and fragrant from an ancient bush and tall;
Fall like smiles from friends of ours who greet us on our way,
Nod at us as we pass by as if to say good day;
We may stop an hour or two by rose and bush and stem,
Fair they are as friendly smiles, and life is full of them.
Drear the way and weary now, but we shall see them smile
Just around the corner and in such a little while.

Just around the corner—just a bit beyond the view
There's a dream we've cherished and a dream that's coming true;

Just Around the Corner

There's a friend we've longed for and whose hand we'll
clasp in ours,
Where the well of water is and where the dreams and
flowers;
There's a bench to sit upon and there's a song to sing,
There's a tree to lie beneath, a bird upon the wing,
There is joy to fill the heart and laughter come to stay—
Just around the corner—just a step or two away.

Just around the corner—let us be upon our way,
Sorrow left bchind us at the gate of yesterday,
Friends of ours are waiting there, with cheer and smile
and song,
And Ah, the way was weary once and Ah, the day was
long.
Let us skirt the hedge and fence and climb across the
stile,
Bid these travelers be of cheer and greet them with a
smile,
Tell them of the joys to be and point them out the way—
Just around the corner of Tomorrow—or Today.

The Understanding

Someday beyond the narrow skies that fall
About our little lives, I may know all
The crosses you have borne, and I may know
The troubles that beset you, long ago;
The struggles you have won or lost; the strife,
The frets, the weary worries of your life;
I'll know the daily debt of toil you paid,
The part of patient sufferer you played
In this half-tragedy of life, and I
Who looked upon you with unseeing eye,
And in my hate was harsh and mean, and blamed
You or for this or that, will be ashamed,
Withdraw the bitter words I said of you
And all my hasty judgments and untrue,
Crave pardon from you, offer you my hand,
And say: "Forgive me! Now I understand!"

And someday, likewise, you may learn of me
The secrets of the life that used to be;
The burdens I have had; the scars I bore
And hid from you; the struggles o'er and o'er
That warped me from myself; the times I tried
And tried again and failed; the nights I cried
To hoped-for Heavens, unknown, unseen, unlearned;
The lashes Fate laid on my back that burned

The Understanding

Their length across me like a very fire;
And you may see the ashes of desire
That like the rubbish heaps of purpose, lay
In gray profusion at the close of day;
And you will stand, abashed, appalled, ashamed
To think you judged me in your haste and blamed
Me or for this or that; stretch forth your hand
And say: "Forgive me! Now I understand!"

To Meet the Day

To meet my tasks with spirit,
  And to do
The oft done thing with strength
  And courage new;
To go forth to the day,
  With faith and trust,
And labor if I may,
  Not since I must.

To meet my disappointments
  With stout heart;
To seek no paths of ease
  That lie apart
From those my fellows travel,
  Nor to be
Absolved from any task
  That strengthens me.

To meet my joys well knowing
  They are lent
To share with whom I may;
  To be content
With less than a full measure,
  And to be
The friend of him who may
  Have need of me.

To Meet the Day

To meet my fellows fairly,
  And to say
My greetings gracefully,
  And yea or nay
With single tongue and gently;
  To be blind
To little human faults,
  And to be kind.

To meet myself right fairly;
  To be glad
For life and chance; to prize
  What joys I've had;
Fight manfully, play gladly,
  With no spent
And sullen spirit mine,
  And be content.

Virtue

"If a feller gets up to the top of the heap,"
  Says Hiram Green to me;
"If he works while I'm in bed asleep
  Like an ant or a busy bee;
If he takes the chance that I threw away,
  A chance that I thought was slim,
And makes it win—I ain't goin' to say
  It was all fool luck for him.

"If a feller plows and plants his grain
  When I'm whittlin' a stick for mine,
Or fishin' or thinkin' it's goin' to rain
  Or waitin' for more sunshine;
If he plugs along with the vim I lacked
  And profits by good hoss sense,
I ain't goin' to play the baby act
  And blame it on providence.

"If a feller does what he thinks is best
  With his cattle and grain and rents,
I ain't goin' to say he's featherin' his nest
  At somebody else's expense;
For a feller can plow and a feller can sweat,—
  I'm a purty free will, I be,
If I got the zip to go out and get
  What there is in the world for me.

Virtue

"I ain't goin' to say that he won't play square
In what he may think or do;
I'm goin' to think he will play the game fair
As mebbe I would, or you.
I ain't a-writin' no judgment book,—
If we make him a town trustee
I ain't goin' to think he'll be a crook,
Any more 'n you would—or me.

"I can't help thinkin' that mebbe the worst
Is the feller than runs and tells
The shady story—who's always first
Suspectin' somebody else.
When Virtue was passed around that Day,
I wasn't there to see,
But the other feller, I'm bound to say,
Got just as much as me."

Peep o' Dawn

Mornin', Sunshine! Howdy do!
Mighty glad t' welcome you!
  Heard th' field larks tellin' me
  You was here an' come t' see!
Heard a hundred voices say:
"Sunshine's come t' stay all day!"
  Mighty glad t' welcome you,
  Mornin', Sunshine! Howdy do!

Mornin', Sunshine! Heard a lark
Pipe yer comin' through th' dark;
  Minstrel swaller up th' spout
  Told me you was comin' out,
Airly rooster in th' coop
Crowed hisself nigh inter croup;
  Mighty glad t' welcome you,
  Mornin', Sunshine! Howdy do!

Mornin', Sunshine! Glad ye're back,
Seen you through my curtain crack;
  Watched y' shinin' on my bed
  Sayin' "Git up, Sleepyhead!"
Felt yer warm hand on my cheek,
Almos' thought I heard y' speak:
  "Day is happy, skies are blue!"
  Mornin', Sunshine! Howdy do!

Peep o' Dawn

Mornin', Sunshine! Howdy do!
I jist take new life fr'm you.
  Somethin' in yer comin' that
  Make my heart go pittypat.
Wisht whenever I come near
Folks, like you do, I could hear:
  "Mornin', Sunshine! Howdy do!
  Mighty glad t' welcome you!"

Singing Along

He went singin' along
  On the street where I be,
Just a line of a song
  Sort o' homelike to me;
Must 'a' had a sweet soul,
  Fer things often went wrong,
But th' days, on th' whole,
  He went singin' along.

Feller'd grieved, too, I know,
  'Cause I knowed him right well,
An' th' lines he could show
  Had a story to tell
As them lines always do,
  But he knowed that a song
Helped him fight th' thing through,
  An' went singin' along.

An' as gruff as I be
  (An' I'm gruff when I choose),
He would smile up at me
  Like a cure for th' blues;
Seemed to reckon some way
  That th' heart needs a song,
So he cheered up my day
  An' went singin' along.

Singing Along

An' it's odd, I declare,
  When I look back an' see,
How a feller as rare
  As I knowed him to be
Growed a soul good to see
  Out o' things goin' wrong,
While a feller like me
  Ain't a-singin' along.

Durn my shriveled old soul,
  But he makes me ashamed
When I'm takin' th' toll
  Of his spirit—I'm blamed
If I ever half tried;
  Soul, you're goin' all wrong!
Giddap, durn your hide,
  An' go singin' along!

Keep Sweet

Keep sweet—that's all I've got to say;
You won't go fur wrong thataway!
Keep sweet, an' be of heart an' cheer,
An' if th' way ain't always clear,
Strike up a snatch of old time song
To keep us sweet as we go 'long;
For though we've many a bitter day,
Let's try to keep sweet anyway.

Keep sweet—an' when th' struggle's through,
Th' Lord just can't help lovin' you;
Keep sweet—it does us good t' strike
A soul that's sweet an' wholesome like!
It sort o' radiates good cheer
An' lights th' path an' helps t' clear
Th' mists that hang above th' way,
Let's try to keep sweet every day.

Keep sweet—don't let th' sad days blur
Th' brightness of th' days that were,
Or dim with useless tears an' free
Th' brightness of th' days to be.
Keep sweet—with steadfast faith an' long
With strength to suffer an' be strong,
With hope to light us on th' way—
Let's try to keep sweet every day.

Keep Sweet

Keep sweet—with that calm faith that came
When we would ask it in His name,
At Mother's knee, an' were content
From simple trust with what He sent.
Be our hearts th' abidin' place
Of what's th' noblest, gentlest grace
Th' angels know; though dark th' day,
Let's try to keep sweet anyway.

An Epitaph

Kind o' jollied along
  In the friendliest way,
With a smile and a song
  And a kind word to say;
Didn't worry and fret
  If things sometimes went wrong,
Kept his spirit sweet yet,
  And just jollied along.

Sort o' jollied along
  With good cheer all the while,
Had a grip pretty strong
  And the friendliest smile;
Heard him whistlin' a tune
  And a-hummin' a song
Mornin', evenin' or noon,
  Kind o' jollied along.

"Don't you worry," he'd say,
  "For the sun's sure to shine,
There's a flower by the way
  And the day's pretty fine;
Used to worry like you,
  Thought the world was all wrong,
But I always came through
  And I jollied along."

An Epitaph

Well, I missed him one day,
  And a fellow came by
In the lonesomest way
  And a-rubbin' his eye,
Said he'd been at his side,
  Heard him hummin' a song,—
Didn't seem that he died,
  He just jollied along.

When a Feller Makes Good

When a feller makes good—when he wins in the fight,
And especially when it's been grim,
I may be kind o' sorry it ain't me, all right,
But I'm glad, yes I'm glad it was him.
I ain't goin' to be sour that the prize wasn't mine,
I ain't goin' to be ugly or glum,
I ain't goin' to grumble or holler or whine,
'Cause mebbe my time is to come.

When a feller makes good—when he reaches the place
Where he slacks up a bit and can rest,
I ain't goin' to grudge it, or wear a long face,
I'm goin' to keep doin' my best;
For what he can do I can do, like as not,
An' I ain't wastin' time bein' blue,
When a feller makes good, well, it just shows me what
Most any live feller can do.

When a feller makes good I ain't goin' to complain,
I'm just goin' to be glad that he won,
For what has been done, I can do it again,
Whatever's been done can be done;
I'm sorry perhaps that I didn't just find
The thing that from my eyes was hid,
But as long as I didn't, I ain't goin' to mind,
I'm durn glad that somebody did.

When a Feller Makes Good

It gives me a thrill when somebody makes good,
  It kind o' invites me to cheer,
I'd like to have done it perhaps, if I could,
  But I ain't goin' to grumble or sneer
Jist because it was him—he just sets me the pace,
  He shows me what someone can do,
And I'm goin' to pitch in with a smile on my face,
  And mebbe I'll set one for you.

No, I ain't goin' to whine when somebody makes good,
  I ain't goin' to be jealous or hot;
I'm jist goin' to cheer him and then I'll saw wood,
  And I can make good, like as not.
I'm glad when somebody makes good—yes, I be,
  When we thought all his chances was slim,
And it's jist human nature to wish it was me,
  But I ain't a bit sorry it's him!

The Newsboy's Friend

He's the kind of a fellow you like mighty well,
  And he smiles in the friendliest way;
He's forty or fifty I guess,—I can't tell,
  For sure, but his hair's turning gray.
He buys him a paper or two every time
  That he passes the corner by me,
And he never takes change from a nickel or dime,
  He's a regular fellow, you see.

He's a regular fellow with smiles in his eye,
  And he's never too busy to say
Hello to a boy, and he stops going by
  And says: "How is business today?"
He looks at a fellow like he understood
  When it's sleety and cold and he says:
"A cup of hot coffee would taste pretty good,
  And a couple of doughnuts, I guess."

Then he puts down a quarter and says: "What's the news?"
  And I hand him a paper and grin,
And he says: "Keep the change, Boy, and see you don't lose
  That smile—it will help you to win.

The Newsboy's Friend

Who's your banker?" he says. "It's my Mother," says I,
'Cause she is, and a dandy one, too,
Then he laughs and the kindest look comes in his eye
And he says to me, says he: "You'll do."

He's a regular fellow and don't have to try,
The kind you would be if you could;
When he pats your head and looks straight in your eye
It just makes a fellow feel good.
You're not scared any more and you don't mind the snow
Or the sleet or the nickle you spend,
And you feel as if you'd have some safe place to go
If you needed a really good friend.

And some day he says, when my face ain't pure white:
"You've got some skin trouble, I see,
But good soap and water will cure it all right,
I had skin trouble, too, once," says he.
"Here's a nickle for soap—better make it a dime,"
He says, "Soap's for sale everywheres;—
Come up to my office and sit down sometime
And we'll talk of the world of affairs."

The Newsboy's Friend

He's the funniest fellow, and says it as true
  As can be and he don't crack a smile,
But you just sort of feel when he's talking to you
  He's smiling inside all the while.
He seems to know boys and their feelings and ways,
  Just seems as if he understood,
And all of the things that he does and he says—
  Well, they just make a fellow feel good.

Lend a Hand

Yes, there is many a load to lift,
And many a task to do;
There's many a way and many a rule
Set forth for me and you;
But what the task there is to do,
And how the work be planned,
It's best to smile, a cheery smile,
And then—to lend a hand.

There's many a heart that's aching sore,
And many a misty eye;
There's many a soul that needs once more
Be bidden just to try;
So what the need or grief may be,
I'll try to understand,
And smile—just smile a cheery smile,
And try to lend a hand.

There's many a day that's raging hot,
And many a way that's long,
And many a pilgrim needs a lift,
A bit of cheer and song;
So I've one simple rule and plain
Not hard to understand,
It's just to smile a cheery smile,
And just to lend a hand.

Lend A Hand

There's many a grief that's hard to bear,
  There's many a need and stress;
There's many a trial I might share
  And make the burden less;
So let me lift the load a while,
  Until the heights be spanned,
Let me give you a cheery smile,
  And let me lend a hand.

Yes, there is many a joy to bring,
  And many a hope renew,
And there is many a soul to cheer
  And kindly deed to do;
There's many a heart to be made glad,
  If we but understand,
Let's smile—let's smile a cheery smile,
  And then let's lend a hand.

A Field of Clover

It was just a field of clover that the sunshine flooded over,
With an orchard close upon it, and a cottage standing near
That had morning-glories climbing; and a meadow lark was chiming
Forth his welcome to the Springtime in a carol sweetly clear.
It was just some clover waving with its red and white, behaving
Like the children at a frolic when the sun is noonday high,
But it brought me something tender—to my memory a splendor
That was soft and sweet and gentle, and a mist upon my eye.

It was just a field of clover that the bumblebees flew over
With a drowsy drone and buzzing; and the cattle grazed afar
Where the reeds and willows quiver by the bubbling brook or river
Just beyond the snowy orchard where the apple blossoms are.
It was just a picture, fleeting as the song of birds in greeting,
But it bore a thousand fancies that came back to me, as rare

A Field of Clover

As the dreams that one day thrilled me and the happiness
that filled me
When I followed through the clover to the paths that
led—say where!

I went roaming there, and finding me a path I knew went
winding
Through the wood and by the river, when the day was
fine and fair,
I would follow it, forgetting all the world but this, and
letting
This old pathway wind and wander till it lost itself
somewhere
In the tangled wood, and lying there I heard the breezes
crying
In the trees that were so high—so high,—the shade
so deep—so deep!
And when birds and bees were humming, with the same
boy who went chumming
Down the road with me to Nowhere, talked and
dreamed and—fell asleep.

It was just a field of clover, but somehow it bore me over
Like a bridge across the river between Sometime then
and now,
And it lent me all the seeming for the moment of the
dreaming

A Field of Clover

That was mine and yours in boyhood but has gone
from us somehow.
And I'm sure you must remember; rosy June and soft
September,
April blossomed pink with flowers and October with
its brown;
August with ripe apples blushing, March's waking rivers
rushing,
And December with its Christmas and the snowflakes
coming down.

It was just a field of clover, and a cottage where, up
over,
Trailed the climbing morning-glories; and a girl stood
at the door
Much like some one—well, no matter,—but I glanced a
moment at her,
Just a moment—and I brushed my eyes,—and then the
dream was o'er.
But I've always loved the clover, for before the dream
was over
I have seen her stand there smiling, with a smile I've
longed to see
All these many years, and stooping where were clover
blossoms drooping
She would gather up an armful there and shower
them on me.

A Field of Clover

So I passed the field of clover, and the dream it brought
was over,
And the morning-glory cottage lost to view behind a
hill,
But there stayed, the day and morrow, like the bitter
sweet of sorrow,
Something soft and sweet and gentle that my heart may
cherish still.
May has come and June—September; and there comes
the bleak December,
With its Christmas and its candles and the lights upon
the tree,
And all dead may be the clover, but the dream I may
dream over,
Till the Cottage door stands open and a girl there
smiles at me.

Hymn of Praise

Father of mine, who mayst Thou be,
What glory in Thy love for me;
Thy green turf for my carpet laid,
Thy trees outspread for rest and shade;
Thy music in the flow of seas,
Thy summer skies for canopies;
Thy flowers that glorify my day,
Thy birds for song, to cheer my way;
Thy bees to sip my flowers and be
My exemplars of industry.

Father of mine, bid me be glad
For every song the wild bird had!
Teach me the beauty Thou hast set
In every rose and violet.
Help me by patient industry
To be companion with the bee,
And let me pass each day an hour
In gratitude for wayside flower,
The skylark's song, the drip of rain
And for the sickle in the grain.

Song of Hope

Bring me no song of tears,
  Fling me no sorrows,
Wing me no Yesteryears,
  Sing me To-morrows!
Pipe me a merry lay,
  Tune no heart's aching,
Bid me look up and say:
  "Hope! Dawn is breaking!"

Croon me no lullabies,
  Moon me no dreaming,
Tune me the spreading skies
  Hopefully gleaming.
Lull me with Sorrow's voice
  Not into sleeping,
Bid me awake, rejoice,
  Joy in my keeping.

Not ash of dead desire,
  Not flown Septembers,
Light me a living fire,
  Heap me no embers.
Bring from no twilight gray
  Cloaks for dead sorrow,
Sing of the Dawn and Day,
  Hope and To-morrow!

Cherry Blossom Time

Somehow my fancy bids me write a story in a rhyme,
Of bells and laughter and of tears in cherry blossom time,
Almost I hear the laughter ring and distant bells to chime.

Nor did I hear those bells to ring, nor did the laughter hear,
But when she told me of it all, it was so real and clear!
She told me, Oh, so long ago, and yet it seems so near!

And she was just a girl, she said! How strange it was to me,
As I sat there and listened close, sat down there by her knee,
To think of her as just a girl—this mother-girl of me!

And then a bride, and so the bells, the laughter and the tears,
And always all those after days that music in her ears
Was sweet and clear and never died, through all the days and years.

It was in cherry blossom time, and all the trees were white,
As though the snows had drifted them with flakes all through the night,

Cherry Blossom Time

And as the blossoms was her heart, her bride's heart,
pure and light.

She was a bride in blossom time, and heard the church
bells chime.
How fair it is to be a bride in cherry blossom time!
Nor did I dream, the time she told, of making it a rhyme.

And now the bells hung silent and the marriage feast
was done,
And she went forth from Home that day to build another
one,
As lads and lassies all have gone since time was first
begun.

All this she told me at her knee who sat. She stopped to
throw
Them kisses long as she could see that time she turned
to go,
All this the day she was a bride where cherry blossoms
blow.

And one last kiss her mother gave, as mothers have to do
When brides go forth to make a home; her father's last
kiss, too,
Was hers that day so long ago when blossom time was
new.

Cherry Blossom Time

And then she smiled at me who sat there listening at her knee,
While tear drops glistened on her cheek I wondered much to see,
For it was cherry blossom time that time she told it me.

And then she wiped the tears away and said: "I was to see
Them all at cherry blossom time again, when I should be
A year away perhaps, or two, or it might grow to three!"

"And did you go in blossom time and was it not all fair?"
She stooped and kissed me as I spoke and smiled and stroked my hair,
And said: "How many times the trees have blosssomed for them there!"

"But it was far, so far away! And babies came—one, two,
Three, four and five; and there was always much for us to do,
And there was home to make and keep for little tads like you!

Cherry Blossom Time

"But at some cherry blossom time I shall go back, I know,"
She said, "When all the trees are thick with bloom and white like snow,
And we shall hear the bells again as they rang long ago.

"And they shall kiss me once again, and they shall kiss you, too;
Yes, we shall all go back some day when blossom time is new,
And we shall, all of us, be glad, and all the dreams come true."

* * *

And one sad day she fell asleep, and I who write this rhyme,
Kissed her with streaming eyes and she heard olden church bells chime,
And told me so, and I knew then 'twas cherry blossom time.

And often I can see her now, when blossom time is fair,
With tears and laughter in her eyes and blossoms in her hair,
Just as she told me, at her knee when I sat listening there.

Cherry Blossom Time

Her heart was sweet as blossoms were; her soul as pure
and light!
The dream of her may God keep now and always, blest
and bright
As she would have my soul to be—as her soul was—pure
white!

Mahmoud of Ispahan

The great Mahmoud of Ispahan,
In ancient rays a mighty man,
By tribesmen called the Unafraid,
Unsheathed his glittering sword and laid
It by his couch; his limbs were cold,
His shriveled skin was dry and old,
His years four score and ten and one,
His eyes turned to the setting sun
That not again the day should span
For great Mahmoud of Ispahan.

Afar the temples were whose plan
Was of Mahmoud of Ispahan,
And fell the sunset on the land,
All red like blood upon the sand,
As though the slain did bleed again
For Mahmoud and his mighty men,
Whose swords drank blood as men drink wine
Made from all Persia's choicest vine,
Blood of his enemies that ran
For great Mahmoud of Ispahan.

And now in Persia was no man
Great as Mahmoud of Ispahan,
No prince or tribesman who might give
Him battle in that land, and live.
His glittering sword that by him lay
Had slain its hundreds in a day,

Mahmoud of Ispahan

Until that mighty arm arose
Half-palsied from the furious blows,
Nor gold nor slave nor caravan
Escaped Mahmoud of Ispahan.

He called aloud for Belkorzan,
The wisest in all Ispahan,
Scribe to Mahmoud, and hoary seer
To whom all things of life were clear.
" 'Tis I, Mahmoud, wise Belkorzan,
'Tis I, Mahmoud, of Ispahan,
My sword beside me and my breath
Soon to keep life's sworn pledge with Death;
My epitaph 'tis you shall plan,
Plan for Mahmoud of Ispahan."

"My tomb is hewn, and Belkorzan
Shall carve the truth that Ispahan
May know the all that may be said
Of Mahmoud, when he shall be dead;
Aye—you shall write in words sublime
That mighty men through all of time
Shall have the utmost truth to scan
Of me, Mahmoud, of Ispahan.
Swear, Belkorzan, that truth to say
Of Mahmoud, mightiest of his day!"

Mahmoud of Ispahan

There stands the tomb and Ispahan
May read of its once mightiest man,
In letters high upraised and spanned
By centuries of sun and sand,
Yet clear as carved by Belkorzan
The wisest in all Ispahan,
Who kept the oath he swore to write
The truth in words of living light:
"The dust enclosed was once a man,
By name, Mahmoud, of Ispahan!"

A Song of Every Day

Since there are clean lives needed, I will live one,
I will not doubt or quit or fear or drift.
For who may need a glad smile, I will give one,
Myself, in helping others, I'll uplift.
Since there are glad souls wanted, I will be one,
I will not frown or scold, but I will cheer
Some downcast soul when I may chance to see one,—
I will do this Today, and now, and here!

Since some may be unkind, I will bring kindness,
To what I say or do, somehow, someway.
I will not ever close my eyes in blindness
To all the good about me every day.
Since some are weak, then I will be the stronger
To help the frail who grope the way along,
Since some are sad, then must I smile the longer,
And never lose the spirit of my song.

Since glad songs are so needed, I will sing one,
The tasks appointed me I'll strive to do,
Since we need joyous spirits I will bring one,
And keep it sunny, steadfast, strong and true.
I will be quick to help who is in trouble,
I will have love and cheer and sympathy,
And, all the good I do will straightway double:
'Twill uplift whom I help and uplift me.

Song of Friendship

Not tomorrow, Friend, I pray!
Do not tarry—come today!
Who shall say if I shall be
Here for long to welcome thee?
Will the love that thou mayst bring
Be for us a better thing
If we tarry longer? Nay!
Not tomorrow! Come today!

Why tomorrow? Tell me when
This today shall come again.
If this happiness foregone
Shall return another dawn.
On tomorrow canst thou bring
Food for this day's hungering?
Does love breathe a sweeter lay
On tomorrow than today?

Do not tarry, Friend, I pray,
Till tomorrow! Come today!
Come with eagerness and smile,
Nor delay till after while.
Who shall say where I may be
On tomorrow? Come to me
With that friendly word to say,
Not tomorrow—come today!

Song of Friendship

Why tomorrow? Wilt thou be
Any dearer then to me?
Wilt thou see with clearer eye
In the little time gone by?
Little, yet so long 'tis far
As the immeasurable star,
For all time may not declare
There is any morrow there!

Dost thou love me, Friend, and let
This day go, nor tell me yet,
When tomorrow may not be,
Nor be love or light for me?
That be dust in one brief hour
That was even then a flower?
Wilt thou bring me ashes? Nay!
Not tomorrow—come today!

If thou lovest, wouldst thou say
Thou wilt love me yesterday?
Nay! Because 'tis naught!—but 'tis
No more naught than morrow is!
Thou canst love me, much or how
Once alone and that is now!
Do not tarry, Friend, I pray
Not tomorrow—come today.

The Place of Broken Things

I have a little attic room
  Up somewhere in my mind,
It's shrouded thickly o'er with gloom,
  And I could never find
A single thing I've put in there
  Far from the light of day,
That's why I have that attic where
  I hide those things away.

I put in there the broken things,
  That naught of skill can mend,
Cracked pots, bent pans, old hurts and stings,—
  All useless things I send
Straightway into the attic room
  To grieve me never more,
And leave them shrouded with the gloom
  All back of that closed door.

Old dreams that died, to live no more,
  And tarnished friendships, too,
Whereon one time I set much store
  But found they were untrue.
Keen disappointments and old days,
  That would bring me some tears,
If they were open to my gaze,
  And some sad, bygone years.

The Place of Broken Things

And cherished hopes that once I had
  But proved like bubbles blown,
With a short life, to make me glad
  And then in dust were flown.
And long healed scars, regrets and tears,
  That one time seemed the doom
Of all I longed for through the years,
  All in my attic room.

I've put them there, a goodly store
  Of sorrows, crumpled wings,
Dead dreams, flown hopes and many more
  Outworn and broken things.
And there I've laid them in the gloom
  To moulder and decay,
And I have shut that attic room
  And turned my steps away.

Unfit

Life—rude and ragged garment of my soul,
Ill-fitting, spotted, full of rents and tears;—
Patterned for me the cloak my spirit wears
When I had voice nor choice, if it be whole
Or patched with furious passions and the thread
Of evil circumstance.

Some grandsire dead
An hundred years mayhap willed me the rents
Of sloth and weakness and unbridled sense;
Yet Honor bids me now forth to the field
To wrest the victory from mail and shield
And sword;—me in my wretched nakedness!
Nor Honor's sateless greed content with less.

Let me strip off these wretched rags and cast
Them on the dust and rubbish heap of years
To rot with all their stains of futile tears,
Choose mine own knightly armor at the last,
And I will shame thee with my victory
As now, my Honor, oft thou shamest me!

The Secret

Little woman with the smile—
  Simple, steadfast and serene;
Knowing envy, hate nor guile,
  Mistress, counselor and queen
In that royal family
  Of strong sons and daughters fair,
What the secret? Tell it me,—
  I would tell it everywhere.

I have sought and I have found,
  Studied, pondered, cast away;
Dreams have compassed me around,
  Wisdom has said yea or nay;
I have pondered by the lore
  Of the sages ages through;
What the secret? Is it more
  Than the wise men know, or knew?

Surely not at Learning's shrine
  You have gained that soul so fair,
For I made her secret mine
  But your glory was not there.
Burned I long the lamp at night,
  Many a waste and weary while,
Seeking, searching for the light
  That illumines your each smile.

The Secret

Learning has it not, I say,
  Nor ambition has, or Pride,
For I searched them night and day
  And I cast them all aside.
Power you have not, or place,
  Wealth, Fame, Honor or Degree,
Yet the glory of your face!
  What the secret? Tell it me.

Yours the thinly buttered crust
  Of near need and toil and care,
But the miser's hoard is dust
  By this Secret that you share.
You, whose kingdom is the hearth,
  With the nearby chair your throne!
And the wise men seek through earth
  For this peace, and this alone.

Little woman with the smile,
  That with glory lights Love's way,
Will you walk with me a while
  In the darkness of my day.
I would let the sages go
  Where the Ways of Wisdom be,
Read your book of Life and know
  What the Secret.—Tell it me!

Before the Winter Came

I often think of him as where
The flowers are and laughing there,
As when by wood and field he strayed
To pluck bright blossoms that he laid
Within my hands and cried his glee
O'er each new blossom brought to me.

I think of him as when in Spring
I saw him somewhere beckoning
With chubby hand upraised, for me
To come and see a yellow bee
Or gorgeous butterfly or bird
Upon some twig or branch that stirred.

And in the twilight to my chair,
When I'm alone and dreaming there,
He comes and whispers low to me
Of all that was and was to be
Before the Winter came and he
Went with the blossom and the bee.

And sometimes I am sure I feel
His chubby fingers as they steal
Their way to mine and clasp mine tight
And close as clinging ivy might
About a twig, till he shall keep
The tryst of youth with dreams and sleep.

Before the Winter Came

So in that dim and quiet hour
He brings me many a gathered flower
Until my hands are full with bloom,
And odors fill the twilit room
With memories grown sweeter yet,
As dew gleams on a violet.

So let me sit this hour and fill
My soul with fancy if I will,
And let this memory abide
Of flowered path and him beside,
For in this hour 'twill be the same
As then—before the Winter came.

The Masquerade

The night is merry with their cries,
  With clamor and with din;
The dancers masked with every guise
  Are whirling out and in;
The Lords and Beggars, Fools and Wise
  All in a mob displayed,
Till Midnight strikes—drops each disguise—
  'Tis all a masquerade.

The Fool was not a Fool, but wise,
  As we may plainly see;
The Beggar's rags were but the guise
  Of his sham poverty;
The Sage's garb but cloaked the Fool,
  Whose witless soul has strayed
To mount for us the dunce's stool—
  'Twas all a masquerade.

That knight who clanked the armor in,
  A coward looks, somehow,
He who danced there as Harlequin
  Seems not so merry now;
She who was sprightly, gay and fair
  When glad the music played,
Is wrinkled and with thin gray hair—
  Yes—'twas a masquerade.

The Masquerade

And now the dancers are all dumb,
  The music dies away;
The night is gone, the dawn has come,
  The world of every day;
But still by street and lane and town
  The game of life is played,
Each with his mask of smile or frown—
  'Tis Life—the masquerade!

The Broken-heart in smiling guise
  That would conceal its pain;
The Fool who masquerades as Wise,
  That Soul with its red stain
Of sham and cheat and hate and greed
  The part of Virtue played,
That velvet cloak that covered Need—
  'Tis much a masquerade.

The Coward with the armor on
  Who trembles in his shoes;
The Clown, whose soul is bleak and wan,
  Yet cackles like a goose;
And when the voices all are dumb,
  The game of day is played,
And masks stripped off when Midnight's come,
  'Twas all a masquerade.

The Masquerade

And gladness with once merry wile
  Came with hot tears just now,
And fell upon her knees the while,
  The jewels from her brow
All stripped and torn; and humbled so,
  Knelt in the night and prayed:
"God grant us peace, as Thou mayst know,—
  Have done with masquerade!"

Tomorrow

Dear Little Lady, we'll shed no more tears,
  Let us have done with our crying,
I know that life has its frets and its fears,
  We shall not cure them with sighing;
Dear Little Lady, come dry your wet eyes,
  Put by that sad, bitter sorrow,
Come and sit by me, nor see the gray skies,
  They shall be brighter tomorrow.

Blest Little Boy with that bruise on your knee,
  And that sore toe that is smarting,
Won't you come closer and sit here by me,
  While those hot tear drops are starting;
Blest Little Boy, if the day has no cheer,
  Some from the future we'll borrow,
I tell you truly as I'm sitting here,
  You will be happy tomorrow.

Sad Little Dreamer whose face is all wet,
  Wet with the hot tear drops falling,
Not a dream come true to gladden you yet—
  I can hear Hope clearly calling;
Sad Little Dreamer, she's calling to you,
  Bidding you put by your sorrow,
All of your dreams of today shall come true,
  They shall come true on tomorrow.

Tomorrow

Come all ye children and listen to me,
  Little folks, wet-cheeked and sobbing,
Come with the sore heart and still aching knee,
  I know the pain hotly throbbing;
Come and sit by me, for I have known youth,
  Youth with its heart-breaking sorrow,
Come and believe what I say is but truth—
  These will be made well tomorrow.

Frail Little Soul of mine, sick with its strife,
  Timid and weary and sighing,
Faint with the day's heavy burden of life,
  Deep in the dim valleys crying;
Frail Little Soul of mine, we, too, will rise,
  Up from the valleys of sorrow,
Strive on and dream on and come near the skies—
  Life will be gladder tomorrow!

Yesterday

The seasons change, as dead leaves play,
  The world moves on, the pathways wind,
And over there sits Yesterday
  Her fingers with dead garlands twined;
Pathetic, sorrowful and sweet
  She looks once upward and away,
Where time moves on with dancing feet
  Nor looks the once at Yesterday.

Within her lap she holds the joys
  That were but never more shall be,
The dreams and all the broken toys,
  Shrined in the heart of Memory;
Here is a curl, a look, a smile,
  That came and was and went away,
The laughter of some merry while,
  Left in the lap of Yesterday.

Perhaps a mellow song she sings,
  Some old and quite forgotten air,
A wandering breeze at twilight brings
  Soft fingers playing with her hair;
And voices whisper and she hears
  The loves that were but could not stay;
What sad songs murmur in her ears,
  The songs we sang but Yesterday.

Yesterday

And Oh, such dreams she has to hold
  Within the lap of her the while,
The dreams of cheer, of courage bold,
  Of great worlds conquered with a smile.
She lets them trickle from her hands,
  The once while their rare colors play,
And many as the ocean's sands,
  The dreams we left with Yesterday.

She sits, the sunset in her eyes
  Of every day that used to be,
And every day a new day dies
  And she shrines it in Memory;
She lets them trickle from her hands,
  While all their tints and colors play,
As on a beach of jeweled sands
  Cast up from seas of Yesterday.

Last Verse of All

Good by! Your hand!
You understand.
You know the things I want to say,
But somehow, in my heart today
The words stick fast and will not come.
I say good by and then am dumb.
I want you to be glad and blest,
And—well, I know you know the rest.

Good luck! For you
May skies be blue,
And sunshine light your every way.
I wish I had the words to say
What's in my heart—but tears will fall,
And so I say "good luck"—that's all!
I take with me the memory
Of all real friendship means to me.

Hello! Who knows?
Day comes and goes
And brings its laughter and its tears.
Who knows the harvest of the years?
It may be here—it may be there—
It may be soon, or late, or ne'er.
And if it should be ne'er—well, then
Good by! And here's my hand again.

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